

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Wednesday, February 2, 1949

The house met at three o'clock.

ROYAL CANADIAN AIR FORCE

OFFICER IN COMMAND AT MINGAN, QUE.,
AIRPORT

Hon. Brooke Claxton (Minister of National Defence): Mr. Speaker, yesterday the hon. member for Nanaimo (Mr. Pearkes) asked me a question about Mingan, and I should like to answer it now.

Mingan is an emergency landing field on the north shore of the St. Lawrence. It was built in 1941 by United States forces with the consent of the Canadian authorities for use in case of need by aircraft on flights from the United States, primarily on ferry operations. This field was included in the facilities built by the United States for which the United States was reimbursed in 1946. The field is used infrequently and almost exclusively as an emergency or alternative landing field by United States transport aircraft, supplying United States personnel. For this reason, by arrangement with the Canadian authorities the field has been under the care of a small detachment of United States personnel. It is understood that similar arrangements exist in other countries, including the United Kingdom.

The establishment at Mingan falls within the central air command, at the head of which is Air Vice Marshal Middleton.

Similar arrangements are still in effect at Chimo on Ungava bay, and Frobisher on Baffin island.

There are also, by arrangement, small detachments of Canadian personnel in the United States under the immediate command of Canadian officers.

These arrangements are in full accordance with the joint defence arrangements announced on February 12, 1947.

If and when the circumstances requiring the use of these United States planes should change, and if it should be decided to continue the operation of Mingan, that operation would be taken over by us. Arrangements looking to this have been under consideration.

DOMINION ELECTIONS ACT

LIMITATION OF ELECTION EXPENSES—PUBLICITY
TO CAMPAIGN FUND CONTRIBUTIONS
AND EXPENDITURES

Hon. C. G. Power (Quebec South) moved for leave to introduce Bill No. 7 to amend the Dominion Elections Act, 1938, (election expenses).

Some hon. Members: Explain.

Mr. Power: During the session of 1939 a committee of this house was set up to deal with electoral matters. Its third report consisted of a draft bill to amend sections 62 and 63 of the Dominion Elections Act. The bill which is being presented today is an exact copy of that draft bill. May I say that after some consideration the report was adopted by the house in 1939.

The aim of the bill is to limit political expenditures at the constituency level, and to give wide publicity to contributions to campaign funds and to expenditures from campaign funds.

Motion agreed to and bill read the first time.

PROVISION FOR SINGLE TRANSFERABLE VOTE

Mr. W. M. Benidickson (Kenora-Rainy River) moved for leave to introduce Bill No. 8, to amend the Dominion Elections Act (single transferable vote).

Some hon. Members: Explain.

Mr. Benidickson: Mr. Speaker, this amendment to the Dominion Elections Act is designed to permit the voter to indicate his order of preference when there are more than two candidates in an election. The bill is modeled closely upon a bill introduced in the house in 1924 and in 1925 by the then minister of justice, the late Ernest Lapointe.

A majority of seats now and in the future are likely to be contested by more than two candidates. The single transferable vote has been used in Manitoba and Alberta with considerable satisfaction for many years.

By the simple procedure of marking the ballot with figures instead of the blunderbuss X, the elector is permitted to exercise his or her franchise to the full, and the constituency